(d) whether Government consulted the experts to study sustainability of the treaty;

(e) if so, what is the outcome; and

(f) if not, what action is being contemplated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Indus Waters Treaty 1960 was signed on 19.09.1960 and there has been no review of the Treaty by the two countries ever since.

(b) There is no reference in the Treaty to the catchment area conceded by either country.

(c) Under the Treaty, India has already been permitted use of the waters of Western Rivers *i.e.* Indus, Jhelum and Chenab for specified limits of "Irrigated Cropped Area" and storage for specified purposes, and unrestricted power generation from Run-of-River Plants subject to certain specified criteria.

(d) Experts had been consulted recently for effective presentation of India's position in the matter of Baglihar Hydroelectric Plant before a Neutral Expert appointed by the World Bank under the provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty.

(e) and (f) Pursuant to the decision of the Neutral Expert, India is in a position to completed the Baglihar Hydroelectric Plant as designed, with a few minor modifications. Adoption of modern technology in India's design has been permitted. The decision also provides for India to resort to annual drawing down of reservoir for its maintenance and sustainability.

Assistance to backward States under AIBP

†2414. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal to amend the criteria fixed for providing

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

assistance to backward States under Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme is under consideration;

(b) whether there are separate criteria for hilly States for granting Central assistance and if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether it will be ensured that no partiality is done to backward States like Madhya Pradesh *vis-a-vis* criteria fixed for granting assistance to hilly States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) There are no separate criteria under AIBP for backward States. However, the Union Cabinet in its meeting held on 16th November, 2006 has relaxed norms of the AIBP which *Inter-alia* provides for inclusion of projects in AIBP in relaxation to one to one criteria (inclusion of new project against completion of ongoing project under AIBP) for the States having irrigation development below National Average.

(b) and (c) There is no separate criteria for hilly States. However, hilly States of Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttaranchal in addition to North Eastern States are categorized as, Special category States for providing higher Central Assistance under AIBP. In addition to this, projects of non special category states benefiting drought prone and tribal areas are also eligible for central assistance under AIBP *at par* with special category States.

Tapping of underground water

†2415. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of availability of underground water in the country, State-wise and Union Territory-wise;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.